

REMARKS

Claim 20 has been amended. Claims 20 and 21 are currently pending in the present application with claims 23 – 42 being withdrawn.

In the Office Action, claims 20 and 21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. Also, in the Office Action, claims 20 and 21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Zucholl DE 100 39 408 in view of WO 00/32864 to Mourad.

The Rejection Of Claims 20 and 21 under 35 U.S.C. §112, Second Paragraph

With respect to the rejection of claims 20 and 21 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, the Office Action indicates that claim 20 is unclear due to the phrase “the operating for identifying the second part of the identification system.” Claim 20 has now been amended to delete this phrase. Additionally, the Office Action states: “Regarding claim 21, the phrase “based upon the identified data” renders the claim indefinite ...” Applicant points out that the phrase “based upon the identified data” appears only in claim 20, not claim 21, and Applicant has accordingly amended claim 20 to now clarify that the phrase “based upon the identified data” refers to both “a treatment of objects by the household device” and “a dosing of the treatment agent.” Thus, it is submitted that claims 20 and 21 now fully comply with the requirements of 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph.

The Claimed Invention

An exemplary embodiment of the present invention, as recited by, for example, independent claim 20 of the present application as currently amended, is directed to a method for treating objects with at least one treatment agent in a household device. The method includes the step of operating a first part of an identification system to identify data of a second part of the identification system, wherein the data of the

second part of the identification system comprises information on a dosing device operable to dose the treatment agent and the data of the second part of the identification system is associated with a packaging for the dosing device. The method recited in claim 20 of the present application as currently amended also includes the step of adapting one of a treatment of objects by the household device based upon the identified data and a dosing of the treatment agent based upon the identified data.

Conventional dishwashers and washing machines (household devices for treating objects) dispense a treatment agent merely upon a predetermined position within a treatment cycle and/or upon reaching a predetermined condition inside the device. These devices suffer from several problems. For instance, these devices do not ensure that conditions within the device are advantageous after the treatment agent is released. Therefore, the treatment agent may become inefficient for lack of appropriate conditions within the device.

Further these devices are not capable of providing a dosage of the treatment agent which would provide for best efficiency of the agent. Rather, these devices typically release all of the agent or a predetermined amount of agent. Therefore, the dosage of the agent is not adapted to make the agent more efficient.

The present invention provides a method that controls the treatment of the objects to optimize ambient conditions for dispensing the treatment agent from the dosing device at a predetermined time based upon the first data and the second data or a program controller that controls the time of dispensing of the treatment agent from the dosing device during the treatment of the objects to optimize the effectiveness of the treatment agent based upon the first data and the second data. In this manner, the inventive method improves the efficiency of the treatment agent.

The Rejection Of Claims 20 and 21 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) As Being Unpatentable Over Zucholl DE 100 39 408 in view of WO 00/32864 to Mourad

With respect to the rejection of claims 20 and 21 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a), favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested in view of the amendment of claim 20 and the following comments.

The Office Action asserts that Zucholl DE '408 teaches a method for treating objects with at least one treatment agent in a household device comprising operating a bar code reader, computer, and controller, or, in other words, a first part of an identification system, to identify data of a second part of the identification system. The Office Action notes, however, that Zucholl DE '408 does not explicitly teach the data of the second part of the identification system comprises information on a dosing device. Nonetheless, according to a further assertion of the Office Action, WO 00/32864 to Mourad teaches a method of controlling a washing machine and discloses operating a washing machine control unit to identify data of an external datum carrier or, in other words, a second part of the identification system, that comprises information on a dosing device. Thus, according to the Office Action, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to include information on a dosing device operable to dose the treatment agent as per the method of WO 00/32864 to Mourad in the respective method of Zucholl DE '408 in order to reduce the need for detergent producers to be concerned with the characteristics of dosing devices.

It is submitted that even if one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention were to modify the respective method of Zucholl DE '408 with select steps per the method of WO 00/32864 to Mourad, the resulting method would still fall short of having the steps of the method for treating objects with at least one treatment agent in a household device recited in claims 20 and 21 of the present invention. The reason for the shortfall of the proposed modified method of Zucholl DE '408 is that neither Zucholl DE '408 nor WO 00/32864 to Mourad teach or disclose the steps of the method for treating objects with at least one treatment agent in a household device recited in claims

20 and 21 of the present invention. For example, it can be seen that Zucholl DE '408 merely discloses a computer that controls the machine to provide an amount of product based upon product bar code reading. Zucholl DE '408 does not teach or suggest data regarding a dosing device at all. WO 00/32864 to Mourad is of no help in overcoming the shortcomings of Zucholl DE '408 as WO 00/32864 to Mourad merely discloses controlling a washing program according to the read information. WO 00/32864 to Mourad does not teach or suggest data regarding the dosing device at all.

Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of this rejection.

CONCLUSION

In view of the above, entry of the present Amendment and allowance of claims 20 and 21, and consideration and allowance of withdrawn claims 23 – 42, are respectfully requested. If the Examiner has any questions regarding this amendment, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned. If an extension of time for this paper is required, petition for extension is herewith made.

Respectfully submitted,

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